

Faith and Purpose Clubs Leaders' Discussion Guide 1: God as Creator, the Rebellion, and God's Provision for a Way Back

Discussion Guide 1, Week 1: God as Creator of All Things

For the next four weeks, we will talk about how God is the source of all life; what happened when part of His creation rebelled against Him; and the effects of the rebellion. We will conclude with how God has provided a way for us to return to Him.

1. In the very first sentence of the Bible, we learn that God spoke creation into existence out of nothing: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters (**Genesis 1:1-2**). We also learn in **Psalms 33:9** that the heavens were made at this time: *The heavens were made by the word of the Lord, and all the stars by the breath of His mouth.*

Question: From these verses, what do we learn about God?

Answer: God existed before the beginning, He created all things, His Spirit was present over creation, and His Word spoke and breathed life into creation.

2. In **John 1:1-3** we learn: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.* We also learn in **John 1:14**: *The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. He was full of grace and truth. We have seen His glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.*

Question: If Jesus is also the Word of God, how do these verses come to life when you replace Word with Jesus?

Answer (read out loud): *In the beginning was Jesus, and Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God...and through Jesus all things were made. Jesus became flesh and made His dwelling among people.*

3. In **Colossians 1:16** we read: *For by Him and for Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible...* Another translation explains that this includes angels, kings, rulers, and authorities.

Question: Why is it important for us to know that the Son of God created everything seen and unseen—including heaven and earth, angels, rulers, and authorities?

Answer: All things—including people, angels, and every authority—were created by Jesus and for Jesus. Nothing and no one exist outside of His creation or sovereign authority.

Section 2: Let's Talk About It- This section is for you to discuss takeaways from this week's lesson.

- What are the overarching themes of this week's lesson?
- If God spoke all of creation into existence, what does this tell us about the power of His Word?
- Why is it important for us to understand that nothing—including angels—was created outside of God?
- What have you learned in this week's lesson that you did not know before?

Closing Prayer (before closing today's meeting, please ask everyone to bow their heads and then read this prayer aloud):

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for revealing Yourself to us as our Creator and Sustainer. Thank You that all things were created through Jesus and for Jesus, and that nothing is outside of Your power or authority. Help us to trust Your Word, stand in awe of who You are, and live each day for Your glory. As we go from here, remind us that we belong to You and that our lives have purpose because You created us.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Discussion Guide 1, Week 2: Rebellion Against God

Last week, we talked about how God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things. This week, we will talk about how God's creation rebelled against Him and why.

1. The Bible points to several examples of God's creation rebelling against Him, and this includes spiritual beings. The first rebellion appears to be from Satan, a high-ranking angel who turned against God. In **Luke 10:18**, Jesus recounts seeing Satan "fall like lightning from heaven," and this echoes **Isaiah 14:12**: *How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, even though you were as bright as the rising sun! In the past all the nations on earth bowed down before you, but now you have been cut down. You told yourself I will go up to heaven. I will put my throne above God's stars. I will sit on the mountain of the gods, on the slopes of the sacred mountain I will go up above the tops of the clouds. I will be like God Most High.*

Note: Most Christians believe that Satan, the "morning star," and the serpent refer to the same high-ranking angel who rebelled against God and was then cast out of heaven.

Question: According to these verses, what was Satan's intent before he was thrown out of heaven?

Answer: He wanted to make himself a throne above creation and be equal or like God.

2. In **Genesis 2:16-17**, we read God's warning to Adam in the Garden of Eden: *Eat freely from any and all trees in the garden; I only require that you abstain from eating the fruit of one tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Beware: the day you eat the fruit of this tree, you will certainly die.*

Question: What is Adam encouraged and prohibited from doing and why?

Answer: He is encouraged to eat from any tree in the garden except ONE specific tree, and if he does eat from that tree, he will die.

3. In **Genesis 3:1-7** we read: The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked Eve, *"Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden? then Eve replied, 'It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die. You won't die!'" the serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil"...she saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.*

Question: According to these verses, how did the serpent and Adam and Eve rebel against God?

Answer: The serpent deceived Adam and Eve by contradicting God's warning that they would die. Adam and Eve rebelled against God's warning about the forbidden fruit by eating it.

4. In **Romans 8:7** we read: *The mind that focuses on human nature is hostile toward God. It refuses to submit to the authority of God's Law because it is powerless to do so.* And **Romans 5:1** reads: *We have been made right with God because of our faith. So we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Question: How is being "hostile toward God" the same as rebelling against Him?

Answer: Because a hostile mind is a rebellious mind, since anger and opposition toward authority naturally lead to rebellion.

Section 2: Let's Talk About It- This section is for you to discuss takeaways from this week's lesson.

- How does knowing that Satan had already rebelled against God help us better understand the story of Adam and Eve?
- Why did God warn Adam about the tree if He knew Adam and Eve would eat from it?
- How is the human mind naturally focused on being hostile toward God, and why is this important for us to understand as we seek to know God?

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Discussion Guide 1, Week 3: The Effects of Rebellion

For the last two weeks, we have been talking about God as the only source of life and Creator of all things and how His creation—spiritual and human beings—rebelled against Him. This week, we will talk about the effects of the rebellion and God's plan for restoration.

Note: Most Christians believe that "Satan," "serpent," "dragon," and "devil" refer to the same being, and the terms are used interchangeably.

1. In **Revelation 12:9**, we read about Satan and other angels: *War broke out in Heaven. Michael and his angels battled with the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but they did not prevail and they were expelled from Heaven. So the huge dragon, the serpent of ancient times, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, was hurled down upon the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him.*

Question: What was the result of Satan and the angels' rebellion against God?

Answer: Satan and the angels were thrown out of heaven and down to the earth.

2. In **1 Peter 5:8** we are warned to be careful and watch out for attacks from the devil, who is like a roaring lion, sneaking around to find someone to attack, and in **1 John 5:19** we read: *We know that we are of God, and the whole world [around us] lies in the power of the evil one [opposing God and His precepts].*

Question: In what ways does Satan/the devil continue to rebel against God, and how does this affect us?

Answer: The devil is always looking for ways to oppose God and His Word by deceiving God's children, just as he did in the Garden of Eden.

3. In **Romans 5:12**, we read: *This, then, is what happened. Sin made its entry into the world through one man, and through sin, death. The entail of sin and death passed on to the whole human race, and no one could break it, for no one was himself free from sin.* And in **Romans 7:18-19**, Paul describes the human predicament: *I know that my selfish desires won't let me do anything that is good. Even when I want to do right, I cannot. Instead of doing what I know is right, I do wrong.*

Question: According to these verses, what are the effects of human rebellion (also known as "the fall")?

Answer: Human rebellion is sin, and sin causes death, spiritually and physically, because all people are trapped by sin and selfish desires, which naturally lead to destruction and death.

4. In **John 3:16-17** we read: *God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only, unique Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost but have eternal life. People who believe in God's Son are not judged guilty. Those who do not believe have already been judged guilty, because they have not believed in God's one-of-a-kind Son...and the proof of God's amazing love is this: while we were sinners, Christ died for us.*

Question: How has God provided a way for us to overcome the effects of our sin and guilt?

Answer: God sent his one-of-a-kind Son, Jesus, into the world to die in our place, and if we believe this and trust that Jesus is the Savior from sin, then we are no longer judged by God as guilty of sin.

Section 2: Let's Talk About It- This section is for you to discuss takeaways from this week's lesson.

- Why is it important to understand that the devil is always opposing God by looking for ways to deceive us?
- Why is Jesus considered God's unique and one-of-a-kind Son?
- In what ways are we trapped by sin and selfish desires and prone to the lies of the devil?
- How does this week's lesson help you understand the temporary and eternal effects of rebelling against God and help you trust Jesus?

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Discussion Guide 1, Week 4: INSPIRE Week

Welcome to our group! We are so glad you are here [Introduce your leadership team].

We meet each week to talk about God, explore what the Bible says, and discuss real-life topics that matter to students. Although we are a student-led Christian group, everyone is welcome. This is a safe, supportive place to build friendships, learn about faith, and feel connected.

Now, let's open the meeting in prayer [student leader prays].

This is **INSPIRE Week** and it's an opportunity to hear faith stories and the good news of Jesus.

The Bible verse we're working from is **Romans 5:1**, which reads: *We have been made right with God because of our faith. So we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

A student leader shares their faith story NOW

Prayer and invitation:

We will now take a minute to talk to God through prayer. In the quiet of your heart and mind, I invite anyone here who wants to begin a relationship with God through faith in Jesus, to agree in your heart and mind with what I am saying because God hears our private thoughts. I will pray out loud and I invite you to pray this in your head:

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come to you with an open heart. I acknowledge that my self focus has separated me from you. Thank you for promising to hear and answer my prayer, and for showing me that Jesus is the way back to you. I want to place my trust in Him to guard and guide me. Help me to turn from doing things my way and release my life over to you.

In Jesus' Name, I pray, Amen.

Pass out Response Cards NOW (download from the yclprograms.org or YCL phone app)

If this is your prayer today, know that God welcomes you into His family, and you can begin walking in a new relationship with Him right now. And please join us for next week's meeting when we will start a new module.

Challenge: Remember to invite visitors to next week's group meeting and to tell them about your youth group/church.